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Social Isolation Detection Checklist

Community Tools

2019

Social Isolation Detection Checklist

Sheridan Centre for Elder Research

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Building Connected Communities:
**Social Isolation
Detection Checklist**



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the Toolkit visit:
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Overview



Social isolation is related to the number of social connections an individual has, their feelings of belonging and their satisfaction with quantity and quality of social engagement.¹ Social isolation is often the result of circumstances or barriers that limit opportunities for social engagement.

Identifying an individual's barriers (or risk factors) can help you gain an understanding of their needs and possible ways to support them. This checklist was developed for anyone in the community who works with older adults to help them determine if an individual that they are concerned about might be at risk of social isolation.

This Social Isolation Detection Checklist is designed to be used as a starting point, use it as a preliminary screening tool. This tool can be completed face to face with the older adult, or you may use intake records and case notes to engage with this tool. This is not a diagnostic tool and should not be used as such, but it will allow for further investigation and probing into potential cases of social isolation.

Please note the categories in which the assessed experiences barriers, as this will be an indicator of potential service provision and support needs.

Checklist

Please check all the barriers² that apply to the person you are concerned about:

Category	Barrier
1.Socio-demographic	<input type="checkbox"/> Lives alone (never married, divorced, widowed)
	<input type="checkbox"/> Gender
	<input type="checkbox"/> Age 80+
	<input type="checkbox"/> Identifies as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT)
	<input type="checkbox"/> Has little to no connection with family and/or friends
	<input type="checkbox"/> Low income
	<input type="checkbox"/> Other
2. Physical/ Mental Health	<input type="checkbox"/> Experiencing challenges with physical health (chronic condition, mobility issue)
	<input type="checkbox"/> Experiencing challenges with mental health (depression, anxiety, OCD etc.)
	<input type="checkbox"/> Experiencing physical disability(s) (vision loss, hearing loss, incontinence etc.)
	<input type="checkbox"/> Dementia
	<input type="checkbox"/> Intellectual disability(s)
	<input type="checkbox"/> Cognitive disability(s)
	<input type="checkbox"/> Addiction (alcohol, illegal drugs, gambling etc.)
	<input type="checkbox"/> Other
3. Life Transitions	<input type="checkbox"/> Loss of a family member/friend
	<input type="checkbox"/> Recent life change (retirement, moving to a new home)
	<input type="checkbox"/> Being a caregiver
	<input type="checkbox"/> Other

Checklist: Continued

Category	Barrier
4. Environmental	<input type="checkbox"/> Living alone
	<input type="checkbox"/> Limited or no access to transportation
	<input type="checkbox"/> Lacking affordable housing and/or accessible housing
	<input type="checkbox"/> Living in a rural or remote area
	<input type="checkbox"/> Living in an unsafe neighbourhood
	<input type="checkbox"/> Limited or no access to technology
	<input type="checkbox"/> Limited or no awareness of community services/programs
	<input type="checkbox"/> Other
5. Immigration	<input type="checkbox"/> New to Canada (within the last 5 years)
	<input type="checkbox"/> Experiencing a language barrier
	<input type="checkbox"/> Racialized Immigrant (i.e. visible minority)
	<input type="checkbox"/> Other

Additional Notes:

Planning and Supports

Now that you have identified someone who you think is at risk of social isolation, what can you do?

It's time to decide the best course of action to take based on the various items that were checked off. There are several tools in the Building Connected Communities Toolkit that you can use. We encourage you to use the *Coping with Loneliness Reflection Tool* and *Staying Socially Connected Tip Sheet* provided in this Toolkit.

The Interactive Maps for Halton and Peel also found in this Toolkit act as a great resource to see what mainstream, ethno-specific, multicultural, faith organizations and community hubs are located in a specific vicinity. The contact information, web-sites and directions for each organization can be easily accessed in the interactive maps. This can help to support you in making connections and referrals.

Take a look at which categories apply to the risk factors you identified (the left-hand side column of the check list). Here is a quick list of resources that correspond directly with the various categories in the Detection Tool.

1. Socio-Demographic Risk Factors

What you can recommend:

- **Local services or programs** (particularly social/recreational ones) *See interactive pdf maps included in this Toolkit for services in Peel and Halton
- **Call 2-1-1** or visit www.211ontario.ca for **social, health and government services**
- **Try a volunteer visiting program** or consider **becoming a volunteer**

Some examples:

- Senior Connector Program (Halton): 1-855-395-8807 ext 2 or 3
- Links2Care: 1-866-920-6502
- Bramalea Community Health Centre (Peel): 905-451-8090, (home visit): 905-451-6959
- Caledon Meals on Wheels Friendly Visiting (Peel): 905-857-7651
- Acclaim Health (Halton): 1-800-387-7127
- **Call a telephone helpline**

Some examples:

- Distress Centre Halton: Oakville: 905-849-4541,

Burlington: 905-681-1488, North Halton: 905-877-1211

- Halton Seniors Helpline: 1-866-457-8252
- Spectra Helpline (Peel - multilingual services available): 905-459-7777
- Tele-Touch Reassurance Program: 1-800-387-7127

• **Call Service Canada** at 1-800-622-6232 or visit www.servicecanada.gc.ca for information about **federal income support programs** such as Income Security Programs, Old Age Security (OAS) and Canada Pension Plan (CPP)

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• **Call Service Ontario** at 1-800-267-8097 or visit www.ontario.ca for information about **provincial income support programs** such as Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP), Guaranteed Annual Income System (GAINS) and Ontario Drug Benefit Program

2. Physical & Mental Health Risk Factors

What you can recommend:

- **Talk to your doctor** about any physical or mental concerns; including changes in your mood
- **Call Health Care Connect** at 1-800-445-1822 or visit www.ontario.ca/healthcareconnect for help finding a doctor
- **Call Telehealth Ontario** at 1-866-797-0000 for free, confidential **health advice** from a registered nurse • **Visit a walk-in clinic or community health clinic** if you do not have a family doctor
- **Visit a pharmacist** for help with treatment recommendations related to minor illnesses and management of chronic diseases
- **Call the Local Health Integration Network (LHIN)** for information and assistance navigating the system
 - Central West LHIN (Peel): 1-888-733-1177
 - Mississauga-Halton LHIN (Halton): 1-877-336-9090
- **Call the Canadian Mental Health Association Halton Region Branch** at 1-877-693-4270 for more information on services and assistance

3. Life Transition Risk Factors

What you can recommend:

- **Call the Centre for Grief and Healing** for bereavement support (Halton & Peel): 905-848-4337
- **Call Acclaim Health** for hospice and bereavement support (Halton): 1-800-387-7127
- **Call 2-1-1** or visit www.211ontario.ca for social, health and government services in their community
- **Call the Local Health Integration Network (LHIN)** for caregiver support
 - Central West LHIN (Peel): 1-888-733-1177
 - Mississauga-Halton LHIN (Halton): 1-877-336-9090

4. Environmental Risk Factors

What you can recommend:

- **Call 3-1-1** for information about the local public transit system, or other transit options in the community (including taxi and Handi-van/ Wheeltrans) (multilingual services available)
- **Call 3-1-1** for information about housing (including emergency housing) in the community
- **Call the Landlord and Tenant Board** at 1-888-332-3234 or visit www.ltb.gov.on.ca
- **Call 9-1-1** for emergencies (ambulance, fire, police), Halton Regional Police: 905-825-4777; Peel Regional Police: 905-453-3311
- **Connect with your local City Councillor and/or Member of Parliament** for information about the delivery of community services
- **Visit your local library** to use a computer or to learn more about technology
- **Check an online community service directory** for programs in the community
 - www.hipinfo.ca (Halton)
 - <https://peel.cioc.ca> (Peel)

5. Risk Factors Related To Immigration

What you can recommend:

- **Connect with Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC)** at 1-888-242-2100 or visit <https://www.canada.ca/en/services/immigration-citizenship.html>
- **Download the Welcome to Canada book** from www.canada.ca
- Visit www.settlement.org for information about **living in Ontario**
- **Connect with local settlement agencies** for assistance with day-to-day needs, translation services and finding community services in your language.
Some examples:
 - Halton Multicultural Council (HMC): 905-842-2486, Newcomer Centre of Peel: 905-306-0577
- **Visit your local library and/or faith community** – these are good places to get information and meet people

References

¹ Nicholson, N. (2009). Social isolation in older adults: An evolutionary concept analysis. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 65, 1342-1352.

² The National Seniors Council (2016) Who's at risk and what can be done about it? A review of the literature on the social isolation of different groups of seniors. Available at: www.canada.ca/publiccentre-ESDC

Note

This tool was developed by the Centre for Elder Research, Oakville ON, Canada from 2015-19. It is part a 4-year research project called Building Connected Communities: Improving Community Supports to Reduce Loneliness and Social Isolation in Immigrants 65+. This project was focused specifically on the experiences of older immigrants in the Regions of Peel and Halton. This tool is not a standardized or validated treatment for loneliness and it is also not a substitute for mental health advice. The inclusion of any agency or service in this tool does not constitute an endorsement of the service.

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